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Sen. Sikkema says ‘natural increases’ is just an excuse for not making tough budget decisions

Senate majority leader says adding to budget deficit would be irresponsible

LANSING – Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema today said a reference by the governor to “natural increases” in the state budget is setting the stage for decisions to increase spending, resulting in a return to high deficits.

“If we don’t increase spending, we can control the budget deficit,” said Sikkema, R-Wyoming, referring to the projected \$72 million structural budget deficit for fiscal year 2006. “There’s no such thing as ‘natural increases.’ There are only increases in spending if we consciously decide to spend more.

“Government spending isn’t something ‘natural’ and beyond our control – like gravity. It is about the decisions we make or fail to make. We made tough decisions in the past two years to dramatically reduce the structural deficit, and it would be irresponsible to make decisions that increase the deficit again.”

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